

A Jungle Bridge

**Comments, Thoughts, and Pictures
From Costa Rica**



Sunday, July 29, 2007

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*Amid the sounds of jungle clatter, come the nighttime sounds that matter;
Daytime past and schooltime over, darkness provides cozy cover
Homework done by candles glowing, symbol of a family growing
This family's on its way to going, to welcome life beyond their knowing.*

RECENT NEWS

Things we've learned in helping people help themselves – four things are needed simultaneously. The Bridge is literally “on the map” – see us from 26,000 miles up. We meet a very cute insect – that comes with a sting – beauty and the bite. More volunteer opportunities. Your testimonials, please!

BREAKING THE CYCLE OF POVERTY

We're learning that four conditions must be met *simultaneously* if a family is to work its way from poverty to self-sufficiency. Absence of *any one* of the conditions may cause the *entire effort* to fail. Briefly, the conditions are:

- **Legal Compliance.** A family must send its children to school – failure to do so in Costa Rica is child abuse, and the government may take the children away. School costs about \$180 a year per child, and many families can't afford it.
- **Education.** Reading and basic math skills are a must, both for expanding work opportunities and for understanding basic medical instructions to improve health. Education or trade skills to enhance employment opportunities are also important.

- **Income.** A family needs an income to be self-sufficient. In some cases, a micro-loan can assist in this process.
- **Hope.** The family members need to believe that there's a reason for education, for working, for eating well – that there's a reason for doing what needs to be done now. That yes, a different way of living is possible.

The Bridge has been working in each of these areas. See an expanded explanation by visiting www.elpuente-thebridge.org/page35.html

JUNGLE HOMEWORK

The picture above was taken as Willi, Alejandro, an uncle, Dad Abelio, little Maria, and baby Catie gathered around a table at home, doing homework by candlelight. Eric Bellamy, a professional photographer, followed them one day as they returned from school, came through The Bridge, and walked to their jungle home. We feel the photo is a masterpiece, hence the poetic caption above. Every so often we ask Eric “what’s up?”, knowing that it will eventually surface as a winner in some photographic competition. Good job, Eric!

WHAT DO WE LOOK LIKE FROM SPACE?

We were thrilled when the owner of www.puertoviejosatellite.com offered to literally “put us on the map”. If you follow this link, PuertoViejoSatellite.com/index.php?open=107, you can get a look at us from about 26,000 miles up.

For you Google Earth fans, our location is Latitude: 9.651856, and longitude: -82.769634

FUZZY WUZZY WAS A CATERPILLAR



I thought we'd introduce you to one of the local critters.

This guy is an absolutely cute looking little green crawly thing. See those green pointy things on its back?

They're sharp, and they are coated with a nasty chemical that at best can sting, but which can make you sick, and can even put you in the hospital – the insect version of the lion fish.

One of the area women, who works at the local ice cream store, accidentally sat on one, and she learned about it the hard way.

She's loyal, God bless her, and she apparently went to work feeling absolutely rotten, knowing that there would be no one to cover for her if she stayed home.

If you're down here and you see one of these things, enjoy it – at a distance.

No toque los bichitos!

RANDOM NOTES

Struck By Lightning – after a recent storm, in which a bolt landed right outside our bedroom window, we noticed the washing machine had stopped working. It was bought on August 21, 2006, and may still be on warranty. That's a miracle, as is the fact that nothing else in the house appears to have been affected – except for a single 50-Watt bulb that gave up the ghost with a “pop”.

Streetwalkers Cross The Bridge – Word has spread about Jacqueline and Joseph, and their successful 5-month stay in drug rehab. Nanci's been doing her own soliciting with the local prostitutes that hang around at the entrance to town. We may just see a few of them up here at The Bridge having soup. Keep your fingers crossed – keep your prayers coming.

YOU CAN HELP US!

Forward this email to two people!

VOLUNTEER CORNER

A SPECIAL THANK YOU to Alison Millar. This sweet 13-year-old dedicated her birthday money to The Bridge. We just can't thank you enough for that kind of effort! Thank you, Alison!

MORE NEWSPAPERS As you know, we've been working on selling books to increase revenue. One of those books – "[Driving Skills Assessment](#)" – is targeted at the California market, and is endorsed by the Driving School Association of California. Its begun to sell in small numbers, for professionals to test. We intend to target it the general public – senior drivers and their adult children. As such, we need to reach the general public. We're looking for volunteers to help track down more newspaper addresses. How about it, Volunteers??? [Click here and let me know your'e interested getting started.](#)

VISITORS

We had a welcome visit July 12 from the McGarrahs, who chose to help serve soup and deliver a generous donation in person.



Chris, Patrick, Shannon, and Anna McGarrah

Thanks, guys and gals!

VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE

Thank You: We are very grateful for, and appreciative of, the donations we continue to receive from all over the US and Canada. Big or small – great thanks for them all.

Your Words are Wanted: If you're so moved, please send us your testimonials – We'd like to add to that page on our website. If you would send them along, we'd be most grateful!

NOW's a GREAT time to contribute.

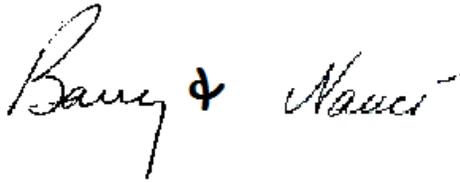
Go to the website donation page by [clicking here](#), where you can use a credit card.
Or, mail a check made out to "El Puente" with "Member# 29409704" in the Memo Field to
USE Credit Union, 8697 La Mesa Boulevard, La Mesa, CA 91941
Remember – deductions are tax-deductible
Do it NOW! You'll be glad you did!

Thank you for your support!

Well,

...djmache

Enjoy!



IF YOU HAVE TROUBLE SEEING THE PICTURES

...go to www.elpuente-thebridge.org/weekly and download the file with the date of this issue.

Go to The Bridge Website by [CLICKING HERE](#)

Go to The Bridge Online Store by [CLICKING HERE](#)

Download a Powerpoint presentation and a brochure by [CLICKING HERE](#)

Go to the newsletter archive by [CLICKING HERE](#)

Here's some Video clips showing activities at The Bridge:

[Nanci and Alejandro working together to serve lunch on the porch](#)

[Daniel, Barry, and Alejandro setting up for the movie](#)

[Watching the movie: this day, "Winnie The Pooh" in Spanish](#)

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